

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**April 27, 1998**

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LAST WEEK:

CONGRESS RETURNED FROM SPRING RECESS - Members of Congress returned from the Easter/Passover district work period with a full docket of legislative business ahead. Some of the unfinished legislative items of note include the following:

- **Reauthorization of Agriculture Research Programs** -- On Wednesday, Conferees filed H. Rept. 105-492, the conference report on agriculture research. The Report requires approval by each chamber and endorsement by the President before becoming law.
- **Emergency Supplemental** -- Currently the Senate and House have differing versions of the emergency supplemental, H.R. 3579 (see March 30 Legislative Summary). The Senate named members of the Conference Committee on March 31, while House named conferees on Thursday, April 23rd. Negotiations on the two bills is expected to begin this week.
- **Budget Resolution/ FY'99 Appropriations Bills** -- Appropriators in both the House and Senate are awaiting approval of the Budget Resolution which will trigger the allocation of funds to the numerous subcommittees. Until this process is complete, the formal appropriations process will likely be on hold.

LEGISLATION OF NOTE-

The following bills of significance to NRCS and conservation were recently introduced:

Bill	Member	Purpose
H.R. 3689	Whitfield (KY)	Would transfer administrative jurisdiction over the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area to the Secretary of Agriculture. Identical bill in Senate (S. 1896).
S. 1975	Coverdell (GA)	Would broaden eligibility for emergency loans under the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

THIS WEEK:

CONFERENCE TO BEGIN ON EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILLS - Differences between the House and Senate legislation making emergency supplemental appropriations will be addressed by a conference committee meeting this week. The House bill, H.R. 3579, contains \$65 million for the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP). The bill offsets spending with a few major government cuts that are not related to agriculture. Meanwhile, the Senate version of H.R. 3579 contains \$50 million for EWP without offsets or rescissions directly related to NRCS activities.

April 28 2:00 p.m. SC-5 Capitol Building

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LOOKING AHEAD:

EPA REGULATIONS ON SMALL FEEDLOT OPERATIONS - The Forestry, Resource Conservation, and Research Subcommittee (Chairman Larry Combest R-TX) and the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee (Chairman Richard Pombo R-CA) of the House Agriculture Committee will hold a joint hearing on how Environmental Protection Agency regulations on concentrated animal feeding operations may affect small operators.

May 13 1:00 p.m. 1300 Longworth Bldg.
USDA Witness TBA

USDA YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE - The Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee (Chairman Richard Lugar, R-Indiana) will hold a hearing to review USDA's information technology systems to ensure year 2000 compliance.

May 14 9:00 a.m. 328A Russell Bldg.
Witnesses TBA

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